

18 March 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDI

SUBJECT : Threatening Outlook in Japan

1. In line with Komer's law that the amount of time which the intelligence community (or the PB) spends on an item varies in inverse proportion to its importance, it worries me that we put out five times the dope on palace coups in Laos and Cambodia than on what may be an approaching climax in our relations with Japan. I had lunch yesterday with the Japanese desk officer at State, an old friend, who confirms that he too is seriously worried about the momentum of the drift toward neutralism. However, when I proposed this at Sheldon's meeting as an NSC briefing he told me wryly that DCI doesn't like to talk about Japan since the Secretary of State is the government's expert.
2. On the other hand it has been pointed out repeatedly in our NIE's back as far as 1952, I believe, that the Japanese were likely to move increasingly toward an independent position, i.e. neutralism. We said this more vigorously than ever in our latest Japanese paper (NIE 41-58, 23 December 1958). Now, following the Police Bill fiasco we have another outburst of factionalism in the Conservative party (apparently a party in name only) and, worse than this, the reported Socialist-Communist-Sohyo alliance to campaign against any security treaty at all. Without debating the reliability of this intelligence it at least connotes a very serious risk, i.e. that the trend toward neutralism in Japan may be reaching the point of no return.
3. If the above analysis is correct it seems to me that we have a major warning function. We need not prove that Japan will go neutralist but merely that there is a good chance of it. I feel that: a. DCI should be urged to brief vigorously on this subject; b. ONE should be urged to write a slant on the NIE, a brief and vigorous statement of the risk and; c. DDP should be alerted to step up whatever countermeasures we may have in mind. I realize that those in the know may already be well aware of this problem but if my friend on the desk is any indication we are still wallowing in considerable complacency about Japan, a complacency which for my money spills over into a lot of other areas as well.

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